

Victoria Primary School

Attendance Policy

**Our learning goal is to ignite our curiosity, motivate, challenge and
inspire us so that:**

Together we aim for the stars.

VICTORIA PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance at school plays a vital part in enabling children to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered them. Without it the efforts of the best teachers and best schools will come to nothing and the education process is undermined. Attendance is crucial to the continuity of learning experiences and hence effective learning.

As with all aspects of our work in Victoria attendance is considered to be a partnership between parents and the school. The 1944 Education Act states that parents are required to ensure that their children receive efficient full time education whether by regular school attendance or otherwise. It is therefore the responsibility of everyone at Victoria to monitor and support attendance and to investigate problems which lead to non-attendance.

This school expects parental responsibility to extend beyond mere attendance. Parents should ensure that their children arrive on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn. Also, parents need to instil into their children a respect for education and for those who deliver it and also stress the need to observe the school's code of conduct and contribute to the positive ethos that is desired.

Parents are therefore expected to inform the school of the reason for a child's absence on the first day by telephone, e-mail or in writing.

Registration

At Victoria, doors are open at 8.55 a.m. Teachers register the pupils at the beginning of the morning, 9.00 a.m., and afternoon, juniors at 12.45 and infants at 1.15 p.m. The official registration period closes at 9.15 a.m. and at 1.00pm or 1.30 pm respectively. Children who arrive after this time will be marked late and will be marked unauthorized. Registration at both key stages is completed in a formal way and is used as a learning experience and at times the responses may be made in other languages. Registration is the sole responsibility of the class teacher. A set of instructions is available to each teacher regarding the method of filling in the register. It is considered important that there is consistency in the marking of registers. A red pen is used to mark children who are present and a black pen used to mark a circle against those absent.

Absence

There are two categories of absence, authorized and unauthorized. In the first instance, the class teacher must be the arbiter as to whether an absence is authorized or unauthorized.

If the class teacher is unsure as to whether the absence should be deemed to be authorized or unauthorized, then the head teacher will be asked to decide.

At the start of any period of absence, parents are required to contact the school explaining the reason for the child's absence. During a lengthy absence the school expects parents to keep the school informed. Telephone messages from

parents will be noted and passed to the class teacher for keeping. The class teacher will also retain absence notes.

Any illness regarded as a valid reason for a child's absence will be categorized as authorized. Medical or dental appointments, family bereavements, some special occasions, and family holiday, up to 10 days in a year, will also be regarded as authorized absences.

However, if the school does not receive an explanation for an absence, or if the explanation is unacceptable, the absence will be deemed to be unauthorized. Explanations such as shopping, visiting relatives, minding the house, looking after brothers/sisters, will also be deemed to be unacceptable and unauthorized.

Intended absence due to family holidays up to a maximum of two weeks in total within a school year will usually be deemed to be authorized. No parent can demand leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday as a right. Parents are requested to complete a holiday proforma giving reasons for absence. This will be retained in the main office. Any holiday absences in excess of an accumulative total of 10 school days within the academic year will be unauthorized. In every case the school will inform the parents that any holidays taken in term time will have a detrimental effect on the child's progress.

If a child does not bring a note of explanation for an absence after several requests, a letter will be sent home asking for an explanation. If there is still no response, the absence will be recorded as unauthorized.

The head teacher will contact parents of children whose absences are thought to be excessive for whatever reason. (See Appendix 1)

A child who is temporarily excluded from school will be deemed to be an authorized absence.

Encouraging Good Attendance

All children are encouraged to have good attendance. The school will also make every effort to enlist the support of the community, police and neighbours to help in improving its attendance record and in reporting incidents of misbehaviour when children are on their way to and from school. In this way the school is emphasising the importance of good attendance.

Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

An EWO is attached to Victoria Primary School and visits the school at regular intervals to inspect class registers and to discuss any problems regarding attendance or lateness. As well as acting upon problems of lateness or absence, the EWO is often asked to act as liaison officer between school and home and the social services. Victoria School regards the role of the EWO as being vital in terms of social liaison. The EWO may also be required to send a letter home via the school regarding lateness or absence. The EWO will make house calls as and when appropriate. Families who do not support their children's attendance at school may find themselves taken to court if all other requests are ignored.

Lateness

As well as monitoring absence in Victoria we are also concerned that pupils develop a routine of punctuality. Children arriving after registration closes will be officially marked as late unless there are extenuating circumstances, e.g. medical appointment. The head teacher will speak or send a letter home to parents of persistent latecomers asking them to make sure that their children arrive in school punctually. If there is little or no response, the head teacher will ask the EWO to investigate.

Truancy

All staff at Victoria are concerned with each child's safety, welfare and happiness. Although to date truancy has been a very rare occurrence indeed, action must be taken at once if there is any concern that a child might be truanting. If truancy is suspected the head teacher must be informed immediately. The head teacher will then contact the parents by telephone or a home visit and also inform the EWO. Parents will be asked to bring their child to school for discussion to ascertain the reasons for truanting with a view to resolving the problem. If discussion with parents is not possible the class teacher and head teacher will talk to the child to ascertain whether or not school related issues concern the child and are the source of the problem. If so, appropriate action will be taken.

Monitoring and Collating Details

Class registers will be sent to the secretary weekly so that school attendance information can be compiled. Details of attendance are sent to the LEA once per term upon request.

Reporting

Individual pupil attendance will be recorded on end of term reports. Overall attendance information will also be recorded in the Annual Parents' Report and / or School Prospectus. The school identifies an annual target for attendance each year and endeavours to meet this.

Currently average school attendance is 95% which falls within national Assembly guidelines but we are always striving to improve.

Signed:

Headteacher

Chair of Governors

Date:

Appendix 1

Attendance Codes			
Red for Present			
Black for absent (circle with reason for absence)			
Code	School meaning	Statistical Meaning	Physical Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole session
\	Present (PM)	Present	In for whole session
A	Absent	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
B	Educated Off Site	Authorized Absence	Out for whole session
D	Dual Registration	Present	Out for whole session
E	Excluded	Authorized Absence	Out for whole session
H	Annual Family holiday – agreed 10 days only thereafter unauthorized	Authorized Absence	Out for whole session
L	Late (after reg. closed)	Unauthorized Absence	Late for session
M	Medical/Dental	Authorized Absence	Out for whole session
O	Unauthorized circumstances	Unauthorized Absence	Out for whole session
P	Approved sporting activity	Present	In for whole session
R	Religious Observance	Present	In for whole session
V	Educational visit	Present	In for whole session
!	No attendance required – strike action/ school closure	Attendance not required	Out for whole session

Appendix 2

Dear Parent

We have noticed from our records that your child was absent from school recently and to date we have not been informed of a reason for this absence. Would you please complete and return the form below to me as soon as possible. Failure to do so will indicate an unauthorised absence and the register will be noted as such.

Thank you in anticipation for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

T.Taylor
Head Teacher

Childs Name: _____

Class: _____

Please tick the appropriate box.

- My child was ill
- My child had a medical/dental appointment
- Other reasons (Please give details)

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix 3

Dear Parent

Childs Name:

Class:

Your child was late for registration today. We are required to receive an oral or written explanation.

Unfortunately this lateness has occurred before and I am concerned that the continuity of your child's education is suffering. School starts at 8.55 am when registration is taken followed by whole school reading time. When your child is late he / she miss an essential aspect of learning development.

Please make every effort to have your child in school by 8.55 at the latest.

I would also like to point out that lateness could also incur an unauthorised absence in the school attendance register.

If pupils are regularly late then the Education Welfare Officer may need to call to discuss matters further.

Please would you contact the school regarding this matter?

Yours sincerely

T.Taylor
Head Teacher

Monitoring and Review

This policy should be reviewed annually and will be updated as necessary.

Date: _____

Signed: _____ Head Teacher

_____ Governor